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RED ROCKETS HIT 'SEVERAL' U-2 PLANES

McNamara Reports On Soviet Downings In Past Few Years

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Washington, Aug. 18 (AP)—Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, has told a Senate committee that Soviet air defense missiles "have shot down several U-2's in the last several years."

He made the statement in commenting on Russian defenses in secret testimony released for publication today.

McNamara was testifying in support of his key defense strategy of reliance upon new missiles rather than bombers or manned aircraft for future defenses.

At the hearing February 25, Senator Young (R., N.D.) asked: "How effective are these defenses that the Soviets are moving into North Vietnam against bombing?"

Very Effective

"Well, we don't know that the Soviets are moving defenses into North Vietnam," McNamara replied. "They may."

"Supposing they did," Young pressed.

"If they did," McNamara said, "they would be very effective against our aircraft, bombers or fighters, at certain altitudes. One good evidence of that is that these same defenses have shot down several U-2's in the last several years."

"They are the types that were deployed in Cuba by the Soviets which shot down a very high altitude U-2."

The U-2 is the then little known high-flying reconnaissance plane which figured in the break-up of a summit conference in Paris in 1960 when Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev accused the United States of spying.

The pilot of the U-2 in that incident, Francis Gary Powers, was imprisoned in Russia, but later exchanged for a convicted Soviet spy.

More

The Defense the testimony there is "a certainty, sound, in both missile operations."

Because of greatly improved defense against aircraft by both this country and the Russians, he said it would be extremely difficult for United States bombers or aircraft to penetrate Soviet defenses.

Recalling that manned aircraft advocates argue "we have never fired a missile in anger, and we have used bombers in many, many wars," McNamara said the

fact is that "no United States bomber has had to face the kind of defenses that exist today."

"Nor has any United States bomber force ever had to survive a missile attack of the kind that the Soviet Union could direct against this country and to which we would be responding, presumably with our bomber force," he added.

McNamara told senators this country had 693 of its heavy jet long-range B-52 bombers in operation in February and that many of them may still be in use in 1970 and even 1975, if modified and improved.

Huge Bomb Discussed

Young asked the Secretary about reports a massive 100-megaton Soviet nuclear bomb might knock out an entire cluster of United States Minutemen missiles in their pits by destroying their electrical controls.

The Secretary replied that "a 100-megaton bomb directed against a Minuteman missile wing would, if it has reasonable accuracy (deleted) destroy only a very small number of the missiles of that (wing) and the so-called electromagnetic flux problem would not make the others ineffective."

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